京都ホームズ

Holmes at Kyoto Teramachi Sanjo

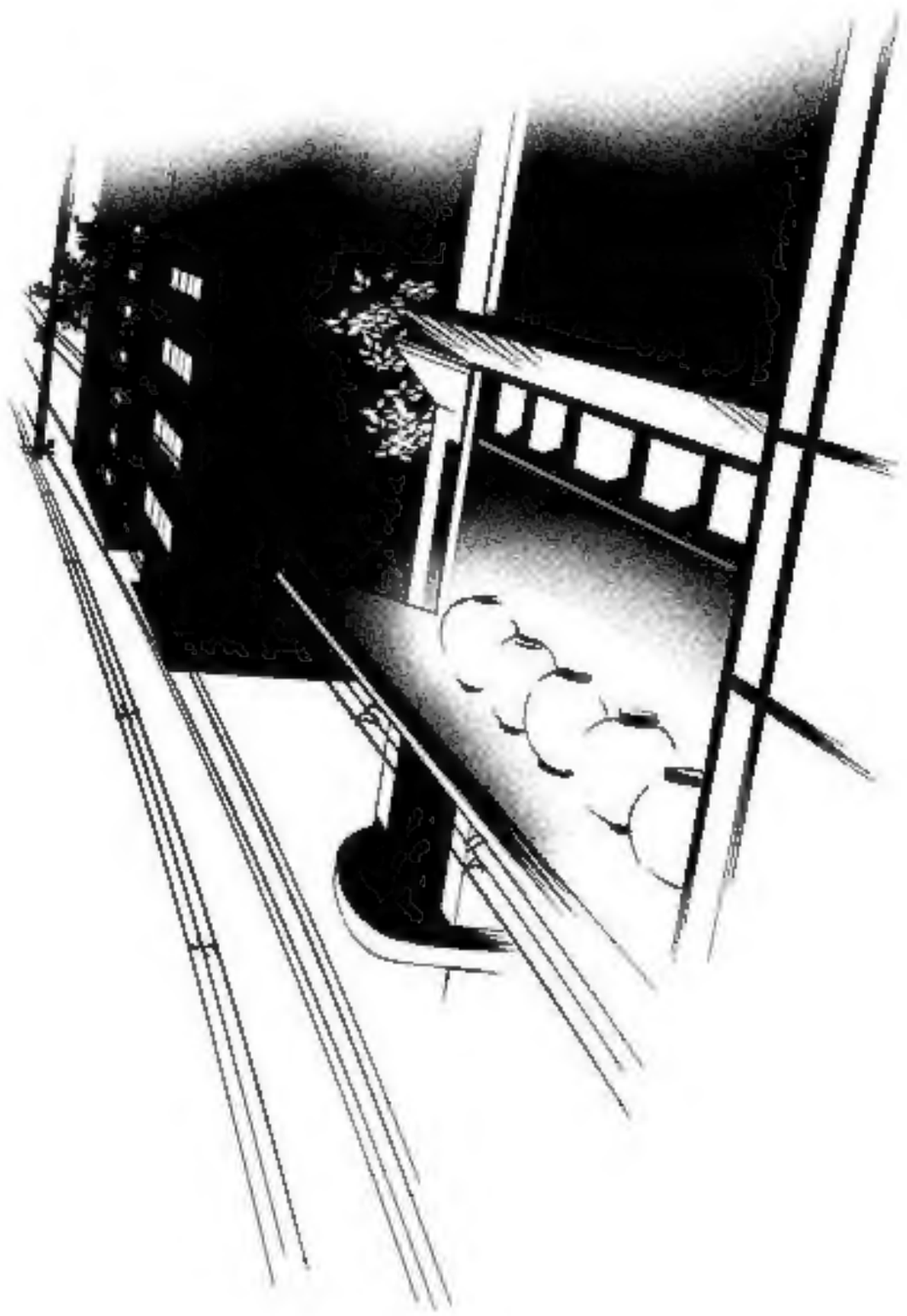
寺町三条の2

ACTION COMICS

ART BY ICHIHA AKIZUKI

WRITTEN BY MAI MOCHIZUKI

CHARACTER DESIGNS BY
SHIZU YAMAUCHI



SHAAAAA

CHAPTER 4
ONE RAINY AFTERNOON

TICK

TOCK

TICK

SKRITCH

SKRITCH

SKRITCH

CLINK

FOR YOU.

MY... THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

THOUGH I CAN'T MAKE IT AS NICE AS HOLMES-SAN DOES...

I'M DOING A LITTLE OF MY OWN WORK, AS YOU CAN SEE.

OH, I COULDN'T POSSIB-LY...

DO SOME HOMEWORK, READ A BOOK. WHATEVER YOU'D LIKE.

WE WON'T HAVE MANY CUSTOMERS TODAY. YOU SHOULD TAKE A BREAK, AOI-SAN.

SURE.

WELL, MAYBE FOR A BIT...

I'VE BEEN WONDERING ...

YOU WRITE YOUR DRAFTS BY HAND, DON'T YOU?

WHY DON'T YOU USE A COMPUTER?

AH, WELL... I COULD USE A COMPUTER.

BUT WRITING IT BY HAND HELPS ME GET INTO IT MORE.

IT HELPS ME FEEL LIKE I'M PUTTING MY SOUL INTO MY WORK.

Have you read his stuff yet?

Aoi-chan!

HEDA-SAN GAVE ME ONE OF YOUR BOOKS.

OH, YES!

ER...

HAVE YOU READ ANY OF MY WORK, AOI-SAN?

AND... IF YOU'VE READ IT ALREADY, I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND...

I'M SORRY...

I PREFER NOT TO HAVE THE PEOPLE I KNOW READ THEM...

The manager's pen name is Ijuin Takeshi, and his main work is called *Kokyu*.

It's set in the "kokyu," the inner palace, during the Heian period.

It's a human drama about jealousy, depicting ministers who ruin the lives of others to achieve their ambitions...

...and concubines who scheme to earn the emperor's favor.

Put plainly, it's a sordid tale of love and hate.

MY WORK...

...REVEALS MY INNER DARKNESS, YOU SEE.

YOUR INNER DARKNESS?

IT'S TRUE THAT I WOULDN'T HAVE IMAGINED YOU WRITING THINGS LIKE THAT...

THOUGH I'VE ONLY READ ABOUT HALF OF IT SO FAR.

WHEN I WAS LITTLE, MY PARENTS GOT DIVORCED.

...

SO I WAS ACTUALLY RAISED BY MY UNCLE'S FAMILY IN TOKYO.

BUT HE WAS ALWAYS FLYING ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR WORK.

I WAS TAKEN IN BY MY FATHER.

PERHAPS IT WAS BECAUSE HE WASN'T SURE...

...HOW TO INTERACT WITH A SON HE HADN'T SEEN IN SO LONG.

THEY WERE VERY GOOD TO ME.

BUT I MISSED MY FATHER... AND THAT LONELINESS WAS ALWAYS SOMEWHERE INSIDE OF ME.

I LIVED THAT WAY FOR A WHILE.

BUT THEN I VISITED MY FATHER IN KYOTO FOR SUMMER VACATION,

AND HE TOOK ME AROUND WITH HIM TO WATCH HIM WORK.

THE FIRST TIME I SAW MY FATHER AS AN APPRAISER,

I THOUGHT HE WAS AMAZING.

I LOVED THE WAY HE INSTANTLY SAW THROUGH COUNTERFEITS. I THOUGHT HE WAS JUST LIKE SHERLOCK HOLMES.

THINKING BACK ON IT NOW, THERE MAY ALSO BE A SIMILARITY IN THAT THEY'RE NOT SUITED TO NORMAL LIVES.

...

A GREAT DETECTIVE WHO COULD ALWAYS SEE THE TRUTH, RIGHT?

IN THE END, I GAVE UP ON BECOMING AN APPRAISER AND GOT A JOB AT A PUBLISHER.

THEN I GOT MARRIED...

BUT THE MORE I STUDIED, THE MORE I REALIZED...

I JUST DIDN'T HAVE A CONNOISSEUR'S EYE.

MY ADMIRATION GAVE ME A GOAL.

I STUDIED HARD TO BECOME AN APPRAISER JUST LIKE DAD.

...AND HAD KIYOTAKA.

BUT...

I DIDN'T ACHIEVE MY DREAM OF BECOMING AN APPRAISER, BUT I WAS HAPPY.

AND MY FATHER LOVED HIS FIRST GRANDSON, KIYOTAKA, VERY MUCH.

MY WIFE PASSED AWAY WHEN KIYOTAKA WAS ONLY TWO YEARS OLD.

COMPLICATIONS FROM A SIMPLE COLD...

OH MY GOSH...

IT WAS ALWAYS LIKE HE WAS AFRAID TO BE AWAY FROM HIM AT ALL.

HE STARTED TAKING KIYOTAKA EVERYWHERE HE WENT.

"WAIT, DAD!"

"GROUP LIVING INVITES DISEASE!"

EVER SINCE, MY FATHER'S BEEN EXTREMELY FUSSY OVER KIYOTAKA.

THAT BOY HAD "THE EYE."

BUT THAT ONLY FOSTERED KIYOTAKA'S TALENTS FURTHER.

KIYOTAKA WAS RAISED IN MY FATHER'S WORKPLACES... MUSEUMS AND AUCTION HOUSES.

YOU MEAN HE DIDN'T EVEN GO TO KINDERGARTEN?

!

...?

IT HAPPENED IN A CERTAIN ANTIQUE MARKET...

THERE'S A TSUKINOWA YUSEN POT OVER THERE.

KIYOTAKA! YOU'RE A GENIUS!

I STILL REMEMBER VERY CLEARLY...

...HOW I FELT THAT DAY.

I WAS INCREDIBLY JEALOUS OF KIYOTAKA.

OF COURSE, KIYOTAKA WAS DEAR TO ME AND I LOVE HIM MORE THAN ANYTHING.

BUT THE DARK EMOTIONS I KEPT HIDDEN BEHIND THAT LOVE...

...CAME WELLING UP IN THAT MOMENT.

MY FATHER'S LOVE...

A CONNOIS-SEUR'S TALENT...

THAT BOY HAD EVERYTHING I LONGED FOR BUT COULDN'T ACHIEVE.

I LOVED KIYOTAKA, YET MY ENVY WAS AGONIZING.

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THOSE FEELINGS,

SO I PICKED UP A PEN AND SPAT THEM ALL OUT ON PAPER IN THE FORM OF A STORY.

...AND THAT BECAME MY DEBUT WORK.

THE FEELINGS PUT INTO YOUR WORK...

BEING JEALOUS OF THE PERSON CLOSEST TO YOU...

THAT MUST REALLY BE AGONY.

SORRY TO DUMP ALL THIS ON YOU OUT OF THE BLUE.

YOU'RE JUST SO EASY TO TALK TO, AOI-SAN.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

HAHA

Y-YOU CAN TALK TO ME ANYTIME!

WHAP!

R-RING

WELL, I'D BETTER GET BACK TO THE HOUSE!

GOTTA KEEP WORKING!

CLATTER

!

THE RAIN'S GOTTEN RATHER HEAVY OUT THERE.

SCURRY

IT'S UNUSUAL FOR MY FATHER TO TALK ABOUT HIS WORK.

WERE YOU TWO TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING PRIVATE?

N-N-NO!

B-BRILLIANT AS EVER, HOLMES-SAN...

BUT MOST TELLINGLY, IT WAS THE WAY MY FATHER WAS ACTING.

AND WITH SO FEW CUSTOMERS, THIS IS THE PERFECT ENVIRONMENT FOR CASUAL CONVERSA-TION.

UEDA-SAN GAVE YOU A COPY OF KOKYU THE OTHER DAY.

I thought so.

H-HOW DID YOU KNOW WE WERE TALKING ABOUT HIS WRITING?

DOES HOLMES-SAN KNOW HOW THE MANAGER FEELS?

LET ME THINK...

HOLMES-SAN... WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT HIS WORK?

I BELIEVE THAT HIS INSPIRATION FOR WRITING IT WAS FEELING SOMETHING LIKE JEALOUSY REGARDING ME.

AND I KNOW THAT MY FATHER ADMIRED MY GRANDFATHER AND ATTEMPTED TO FOLLOW IN HIS FOOT-STEPS AS AN APPRAISER.

MY FATHER'S DEBUT WORK IS HISTORICAL, BUT IT TELLS THE STORY OF A MASTER ENVIOUS OF A YOUNG PRODIGY.

!

SO YOU KNEW...

S-
SOFT?

TO PUT IT BLUNTLY, HE'S SOFT.

HOW... DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT?

...OF STANDING SIDE BY SIDE WITH MY EXCEPTIONAL GRANDFATHER.

AND I... THOUGH YOUNG, I STUDIED DESPERATELY FOR THE PRIVILEGE...

AND WORKED HIS FINGERS TO THE BONE TO ACQUIRE THE SKILL AND STANDING HE HAS NOW.

MY GRAND-FATHER WAS APPRENTICED WHEN HE WAS FIFTEEN YEARS OLD,

MY GRANDFATHER AND I DIDN'T START OFF AS THE APPRAISERS WE ARE TODAY.

THAT'S REALLY HARSH...

WHAT WORD OTHER THAN "SOFT" COULD DESCRIBE SOMEONE WHO WOULD GET JEALOUS OVER THAT?

BUT MY FATHER USED THE NEBULOUS CONCEPT OF "TALENT" AS A REASON TO GIVE UP.

THERE IS NO ONE IN THIS WORLD FOR WHOM EVERYTHING GOES AS PLANNED.

EVERYONE HAS SOMETHING THEY'RE JEALOUS OF.

EVEN ME.

HOW-EVER...

I THINK IT WAS ALL FOR THE BEST.

I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND HOPE IN THE ENDING.

AND ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE DIFFICULT, I HOPE YOU'LL READ HIS BOOK THROUGH.

BUT MY FATHER ...

...FACED THOSE DARK FEELINGS WITHIN HIM AND USED THEM TO WRITE A WONDERFUL STORY.

IT'S NOT JUST PERSONAL BIAS WHEN I SAY HE'S A WONDERFUL WRITER.

IT SPEAKS OF HOW BEAUTIFUL THE LIGHT SEEMS AFTER YOU EXPOSE THOSE FEELINGS AND GET HURT.

ONCE I DO THAT...

MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO FACE THINGS, TOO.

I'LL READ IT THROUGH TO THE END...

FOR SURE.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, AOI-SAN?

OF COURSE I EXPERIENCE SUCH FEELINGS MYSELF.

...THAT I THINK YOU'RE ABOVE THINGS LIKE JEALOUSY.

SOMETIMES YOU SEEM SO ENLIGHTENED...

BUT, HONESTLY, I'M A LITTLE RELIEVED.

THAT NATURALLY LEFT ME REELING WITH JEALOUSY, SHOCK, AND FRUSTRATION.

FOR EXAMPLE, MY HIGH SCHOOL GIRL-FRIEND...

...WAS STOLEN BY A MAN WHO WAS MY PRECISE OPPOSITE—AN ARROGANT, OVERBEARING OSAKAN.

UH...

WHAT?!

CHAPTER 4
END